

PAROLE LAW SHUTS THE GATES

Nevada State Journal shows parole law TOUGH on crime!

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EDITORIALS

'Early' Parole Bill? Figures Tell the Story

During the last regular session of the Nevada Legislature Gov. Grant Sawyer pressed for, and won passage of, a new parole law.

Great was the wailing from his political enemies, who charged the governor with being soft on criminals. They made such a loud noise that a number of sincere Nevadans were convinced Sawyer was practically responsible for turning the entire criminal element of the state loose upon the public.

The bill was branded as the "early parole" bill — and it is referred to by that name to this day.

It was generally accepted during 1965 that if the governor sought re-election the "early parole" bill which the Nevada State Legislature enacted into law would be an albatross around his neck, and might defeat him in the 1966 election.

Even today people remember all the abuse that was heaped upon the state's chief executive — and some of them, no doubt, are still irritated at him for giving

crime and criminals the green light in Nevada.

However, it will be noted that those "in the know" in the opposition party are not raising the parole legislation as an issue in the current campaign.

The reason is, of course, that they know the hue and cry they set up for months on end was, purely and simply, political hot air.

Has the governor coddled the criminals by pushing for his parole bill?

Hark to this paragraph in a Journal news story from Carson City, quoting statistics on prisoners being "sprung" from the Nevada State Prison:

"A total of 37 per cent of all prisoners eligible for parole in Nevada during the past fiscal year were granted release, as compared to 50 per cent the previous two years."

George Reed, state probation and parole chief, has contended since his appointment in March of last year, as did Gov. Sawyer all along, that the "early parole" law, in actuality, was a "late parole" law.

It is true, perhaps, that in certain isolated circumstances under the new law a prisoner may get earlier parole than he could under the old law.

However, in the wider view, as noted in the above quotation, just the opposite is the case. Said Reed in releasing statistics on

prisoners "doing time" at the prison: "The record shows that during the past year, prisoners in every category are now serving longer prison terms than has been true in the history of the Nevada State Prison."

Reed did not mention anything about the parole law in releasing his figures — he didn't have to do so. The figures spoke for themselves.

He gave a number of examples, but one here will suffice.

From 1960 to 1964 prisoners serving sentences for first degree murder served an average of 9.2 years while during the past year they served 11.05 years.

Some may say they ought to serve much longer than that. But whether they should or not isn't the point here. The point is that all the while the governor was maintaining the parole bill was tougher, not easier, than the statute in effect he was dead right, and those who were "bad rapping" him were dead wrong. They were, of course, because they didn't know what they were talking about — and that includes most of the high-placed Republicans in the state, plus a good many law enforcement officers.

Reed's figures refute the criticism of the parole bill and are evidence enough to warrant apologies from Gov. Sawyer's critics. The governor, of course, will hardly hold his breath until they are forthcoming.



HE FIGHTS FOR NEVADA

SAWYER

Democrat for

GOVERNOR



NEVADANS FOR SAWYER
Robert E. Jones, Chairman
Clark County Committee